

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~56-51  
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TO: Secretary of State

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SENT DEPARTMENT 954; REPEATED INFORMATION PRIORITY LONDON 159,  
PRIORITY TEHRAN 125, BASRA UNNUMBERED.

DEPTEL1119.

Fully share Department's concern over situation developing Shatt-al-Arab, both as regards use of Khosroabad and insistence ships bound for Iranian ports must fly Iranian flag. (British Embassy Tehran has reported refusal fly flag will result blacklisting of all ships and harbor craft belonging to companies concerned and that blacklisting will apply to all Iranian ports, not merely those in Shatt.)

There can be no question that Iraqi elements hostile to the US will make capital out of Iranian action, charging it US instigated. Supporting evidence which could be adduced includes recent CENTO meeting Washington and presence there Iranian Prime Minister, plus well known American interests in Iranian oil, US military and economic aid to Iran, direct involvement Pan-American in Khosroabad question, and generally close US-Iranian relations.

I therefore concur in proposed demarche to Iranian Government. If it is made and produces more conciliatory Iranian attitude, I should be fully prepared discuss question in general terms with Foreign Minister Jawad and urge that Iraqis take concrete step discuss Khosroabad and other aspects of Shatt dispute with Iranians. Do not think it would be useful for me to talk to Qassim on this subject especially at present juncture. This might be done later if necessary.

I have

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I have talked whole question over with British Ambassador this morning and find we are in complete agreement. I judge from him, however, that British are, naturally less interested than we in Khosroabad question and attach less importance to this motivation for Iranian action.

We here unable comment re Iraqi arguments that technical reasons bar use Khosroabad.

JERNEGAN

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